

# A BOY'S LIFE

Central Park – weekend - mid-day - Maggie jogs over to where Jack is sitting watching his son Jason and smoking a joint. She stretches to get his attention, which she already has.

MAGGIE:  
Oh God. Oh God.

JACK:  
Been doing some running, huh? Hey. Out doing some running huh? Excuse me.

MAGGIE:  
What?

JACK:  
I'm talking to you.

MAGGIE:  
Yes?

JACK:  
Asked you a question?

MAGGIE:  
What?

JACK:  
What's it for?

MAGGIE:  
We're jogging against apartheid.

JACK:  
Really.

MAGGIE:  
No. Of course not.

JACK:  
Oh. Interesting people, the Boers, you think?

MAGGIE:  
I wouldn't know.

(Pause. Maggie coughs violently.)

JACK:  
Something wrong?

MAGGIE:  
I'm going to die.

JACK:  
You should catch your breath.

MAGGIE:  
That's what I'm trying to *do*.

JACK:  
(re: a pin on Maggie's chest)  
May I? Ah yes. "Question Authority"

MAGGIE:  
That's what it says.

JACK:  
You know-excuse me-that's a bad place for a button. It can restrict your circulation,  
should I take it off?

MAGGIE:  
Where'd you get that?

JACK:  
I beg your pardon, but I didn't "get it" anywhere. It's something I have to know in my  
line of wok.

MAGGIE:  
And what might that be?

JACK:  
I'm a cardiologist.

MAGGIE:  
Please go away.

JACK:  
Pardon?

MAGGIE:  
You heard me. I'm not in the mood for it. Go bother somebody else.

JACK:  
(calls out re: child)  
HEY JASON! YO! OFF THE SWINGS!...YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! I'LL COME  
OVER THERE! I'LL COME OVER THERE! YOU WANT ME TO COME O—  
(re: Maggie)  
Kid's looking for a brick to the head.

MAGGIE:  
Cute.

JACK:  
Yah.

MAGGIE:  
How old?

JACK:  
I dunno...five, six maybe.

MAGGIE:  
You don't know how old your kid is?

JACK:  
He's not mine.

MAGGIE:  
Sorry, it's--

JACK:  
What do I look like? Come *on*.

MAGGIE:  
*Okay*

JACK:  
I wouldn't have a kid like that. Give me some credit.  
(pause)  
He's my ward.

MAGGIE:  
Your ward?

JACK:  
Well, I'm more like his tutor.

MAGGIE:  
What do you teach him?

JACK:  
What do I teach him? I teach him about life. Don't play with matches...write down phone messages...that kind of thing. Ah, sorry I bothered you. I didn't mean to bother you.

MAGGIE:  
Yeah, well.

JACK:  
It's just you looked...in need.

MAGGIE:  
I'm not  
(pause)  
What's 10K?

JACK:  
Pardon?

MAGGIE:  
10K, what is it?

JACK:  
Well, I think it comes to around six miles.

MAGGIE:  
Miles.

JACK:  
It's, you know, metric.

MAGGIE:  
Six *miles*? I'm gonna kill him.

JACK:  
Who??

MAGGIE:  
Nobody. A friend.

JACK:  
Must be quite a fella.

MAGGIE:  
He's an asshole. You know?

JACK:  
Sure.  
(offers the joint)  
You want?

MAGGIE:  
No. Yes.  
(she takes it)  
What am I doing? What am I doing?

JACK:  
Well, it looks to me like—  
(re: the child)

JASON! OVER HERE! WHAT ARE YOU, AN IDIOT? HOW MANY TIMES AM I  
GONNA TELL YOU? STOP ACTING LIKE A MONGOLOID AND GET OFF THE  
SWING. WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY? THAT'S RIGHT YOU SAID NOTHING!  
(re: Maggie)

Let me tell you, that kid has a mouth like a sewer. I don't know where he gets it from. I'd  
have that kid horsewhipped you can't do that though, can you? They're delicate, aren't  
they? There are all kinds of sociological factors involved. You smack them in the head.  
The next thing you know they're strolling through Arby's with a high-powered rifle. And  
you're to blame.

MAGGIE:  
Come on.

JACK:  
You think I'm kidding? Nine out of ten experts will agree with me.  
(re: the joint)  
Have another hit.

MAGGIE:  
I shouldn't  
(She takes the joint. They look at each other. Pause.)

JACK:  
(re: Maggie's headphones)  
What's on the phones.

MAGGIE:  
Oh, nothing.

JACK:  
It's ok, I'm eclectic. Fred Waring Singers?

MAGGIE:  
No, its nothing. Actual nothing. They're not even plugged in, see? You know how sometimes you just can't stand to talk to someone? You know?

JACK:  
Your friend.

MAGGIE:  
It's not enough he's prancing around in spandex pajamas, he's got to keep telling me how *wonderful* it feels to be *alive* on a day like this. And how he feels all this energy, this *beautiful* energy *flowing* out of him. He's like a cheap microwave.

JACK:  
Spandex pajamas?

MAGGIE:  
It's his outfit. He's got all these...*outfits*, right? He never just *wears* anything.  
(pause)  
Listen.

JACK:  
Yes

MAGGIE:  
He gets his body waxed. I'm not kidding.

JACK:  
Well.

MAGGIE:  
Not a hair on him. He's from Portugal.

JACK:  
Right.

MAGGIE:  
So there you have it.  
(pause)

Your kid's on the monkey bars, is that ok?

JACK:  
He's not my kid.

MAGGIE:  
Well your whatever. Christ, I'm stoned. You're not really a cardiologist.

JACK:  
Not literally, no.

MAGGIE:  
So are you trying to pick me up or what?

JACK:  
I'm just sitting here.

MAGGIE:  
You sit here often?

JACK:  
I've got a lot of quality time on my hands.  
(re: the child)  
HEY! WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT HANGING UPSIDE DOWN HUH? REMEMBER  
JUSTIN HENRY!

MAGGIE:  
Who?

JACK:  
That punk form *Kramer vs. Kramer*. You know where he falls off the jungle gym? I made him watch it on the VCR. Now he wants to be in the movies. Ae you seriously involved?

MAGGIE:  
Where?

JACK:  
Your Portuguese friend.

MAGGIE:  
Yeah, sure. We bought a sofa bed together. That counts for something, doesn't it, we both sleep on it. Ah, my god. He loves me, and I can't listen to him speak without looking for the carving knife. He's so...I mean, just what is going *on*? What are we *doing*? We drift into record shops, we wear nice clothes, we eat Cajun food, and what is all that? It's *garbage*, that's all it really is. Absolute...Where's the foundation eh? Where's

the...Look, I read the papers. He doesn't know it. The world is coming to an end. I'm not *kidding*. We need to be getting better don't we? As a species? We should be improving.

But we're not. The world is coming to an end and I'm spending my last moments thinking about...ach, who *knows*, sugar cones, skin cream, *nonsense*. Do you follow me?

JACK:  
Yes, yes, I –

MAGGIE:  
I don't want to help other people. I say I do, but I don't. I don't know.

JACK:  
Great dope, huh?

MAGGIE:  
Yeah.

JACK:  
You ever see *It's a Wonderful Life*?

MAGGIE:  
No.

JACK:  
It's on TV all the time.

MAGGIE:  
I haven't seen it. It's not a crime.

JACK:  
Ok, Jimmy Stewart wants to kill himself, right? He's gonna jump off a bridge. Then this angel, bear with me, angel comes down, shows what the world would have been like if he'd never lived. And Jimmy Stewart realizes all the good he's done, without even knowing it.

MAGGIE:  
Uh-huh.

JACK:  
Didn't even know it.

MAGGIE:  
So...what good have you done?

JACK:



Well, there you go. I might be another Mother Theresa, who can say?

MAGGIE:  
Or you might just be selfish.

JACK:  
Yeah, that's another possibility.  
(pause)  
I'm going to be finished here pretty soon.

MAGGIE:  
How nice for you.

JACK:  
Maybe we could get together?

MAGGIE:  
How do you mean?

JACK:  
You know, get...together. See what happens. I'm not trying to pick you up.

MAGGIE:  
What are you trying to do?

JACK:  
We could just talk. Would you like to talk? I think we could talk about some things.  
Listen. I want to talk to you.

MAGGIE:  
What about your ward?

JACK:  
I'll drop him off.

MAGGIE:  
Where?

JACK:  
Where he *lives*.

MAGGIE:  
And where is that?

JACK:

Well...it would be interesting, wouldn't it?

MAGGIE:  
Yes. Very. But that's really not a *reason*. Besides...you're married.

JACK:  
No I'm not.

MAGGIE:  
And you've got a kid.

JACK:  
No I don't.

MAGGIE:  
And I think you're just kind of stoned and bored.  
(pause)  
Sorry.

JACK:  
Look at that kid. I swear he's living with his head up his ass.

MAGGIE:  
Maybe he'll become a proctologist.

JACK:  
Yah.

MAGGIE:  
I'm Maggie.

JACK:  
Jack. Hello Maggie.

MAGGIE:  
Hello Jack.

JACK:  
Hi.  
(Maggie starts out, turns back)

MAGGIE:  
Um ...  
(she looks at him. Pause. She shakes her head and exits)